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TAMPA, FLA.  
CONDOR

An FBI agent has confirmed federal officials are investigating the operations of a man who local officials are holding under \$250,000 bond for a worthless check charge.

William C. Cruse, 64, was arrested Friday for passing a worthless \$100 check and sheriff's deputies said the high bond was requested by the FBI because he still is under investigation.

An FBI spokesman said no charges have been filed against Cruse and said he did not know if any were anticipated.

Cruse came to Tampa last June as president of Condor Tampa Inc., which he said would build a telecommunications research plant employing several hundred people.

He told Committee of 100 Executive Director Fred Meade he was a project director for Fairchild Camera and Instrument Co. in Palo Alto, Calif., and the new plant would be a division of Fairchild or a joint venture.

But Meade said this week he didn't hear much further about the plant until a few weeks ago when several local businesses called and said Cruse was seeking credit.

Meade said he contacted Cruse about his reported financial problems and was told he had switched from Fairchild to Northrop and was shown papers indicating Cruse had been approved a defense contractor by the Defense Department at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

But Meade said neither the defense department nor Northrop had any record of Cruse.

He said Cruse told him the lack of funds was a "counterintelligence mixup."

"It's just where the money is coming from that is top secret," Cruse told Meade. "Don't worry about it."

Cruse left Tampa Tuesday, allegedly for Zurich, Switzerland, to resolve problems in getting money transferred from bank accounts there to accounts in Tampa. FBI agents were waiting to question him when he returned Thursday.

Cruse told a reporter Friday his firm "had suffered a major leak in its security," and indicated a counter-espionage investigation was under way involving the FBI, the CIA and the Department of Defense.

He said his financial problems were "compounded by a banking foulup," and would be straightened out soon.

Arthur Roth, who was hired away from another company by Cruse to handle construction of the proposed plant, said he and several other employees decided last week that too many of Cruse's stories conflicted and turned to the FBI.

"We decided it was time to ask the FBI to investigate," Roth said. "They did and determined there were many irregularities in the operation."

Roth said he left Condor Tampa Inc., last week after his pay check bounced.